

CHRISTIANITY and CRISIS

A Christian Journal of Opinion

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PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION
& EDUCATION

The Importance of the Right to Vote

The spectacle of the United States Senate wearing down a filibuster is not likely to impress the rest of the world with the glories of American democracy. Yet even these dreary maneuvers are moving toward a civil rights bill. The issue among congressional leaders is not whether there shall be a new law, but which Presidential candidate will get the credit. This marks a vast change from past years.

The opposition, though it gives signs of defeatism, is stubborn and sometimes bitter. Part of the tedious debate is simply for the record; senators must show the folks back home that they are loyal to white supremacy. Part of it represents the fury of a frustrated faction that finds its old power suddenly gone. Another part is an effort to get a compromise—and it may succeed.

What is most certain, however, is that Congress will do something to protect the rights of the Negroes to vote. Other important issues are at stake, but voting is the primary one. Both morally and strategically, this is the place for progress. Some fifteen years ago, Gunnar Myrdal said that the most successful pressure for change would come "where the mores are weakest and where people are already beginning to question them (or have a divided conscience with respect to them)." Such is certainly the case with regard to voting. Amid

all the rationalization of the recent debates, the most intransigent legislators have been reluctant to reject the principle of "one man, one vote." Those who oppose school integration or "social equality" do not want to argue before the nation that the Negro should not have the right to vote.

At this particular juncture of history the ballot will make a tremendous difference. Symbolically it is the most meaningful of all democratic rights. Practically it will have the importance of producing its greatest effect in precisely those areas where integration has been slowest.

School desegregation has moved gradually from the border states toward the Deep South. Today—almost six years after the Supreme Court declared compulsory segregation unconstitutional—every state with fewer than thirty per cent Negroes has begun at least token integration. But in the five states with more than thirty per cent Negroes, not a single child attends an integrated public school. The Negro vote will, of course, make the biggest difference where there are most Negro voters, i.e., in the states where the Negro has so far gained least. Mississippi, for example, with forty-five per cent Negroes, faces a stupendous change in its politics.

Another way to view the situation is in terms of county voting. Although 131 counties have a

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majority of Negroes, only one (in Georgia) has a majority of Negro voters. White citizens in some counties, where a sheriff has traditionally connived with lynch law, are terrified at the possibility of a Negro sheriff and judge. Although white people may fervently hope that Negroes will not vote as a racial bloc, they recognize uneasily that the dominant whites have long taught the colored people to see themselves primarily as a racial group.

Of course no act of Congress will bring an instantaneous change. A variety of intricate legal and extra-legal practices will continue to inhibit the Negro voter in some areas. But a dramatic change is imminent and the Negro will have democratic ways to demand his due in the very localities that have been most impervious to change.

A foretaste of things to come can be seen in those places where Negroes already constitute a significant part of the electorate. In those cities, Southern as well as Northern, where Negroes sit on the school board and city council, their voices are effective. And in many a city where a Negro could never be elected mayor, the white candidates for mayor still cultivate Negro votes.

In states where Negroes rarely vote, the political candidates in the primaries (the only elections that matter) frequently try to outshout each other in appeals to racial prejudice. Even the broad-minded candidate tries to appear to be a segregationist. Where the Negro vote is important, however, candidates must move in the opposite direction. There even the prejudiced candidate is glad to have news photographers record his handshake with Negro leaders. His friends will forgive his lapse as a political necessity.

It is often said that laws cannot produce friendship. Laws can, however, bring a measure of justice and can improve the whole climate of public discussion. We must still endure great agonies in facing our racial problems, but we will take a great step forward with civil rights legislation that makes the vote available.

R.L.S.

A GRIM FAIRY TALE

IN RECENT WEEKS the national stage has been occupied by a tragicomedy, variously titled: "Red Riding Hood Goes to Church," "Air Force 'Missile' Hits Church," or "Walter Rides Again." We don't mean to be flip about a matter that has disturbing aspects, but we find that a sense of

humor helps to keep our blood pressure down when we can no longer bear to read the headlines.

The actors were well cast in most cases, if only because they were doing what they knew best. There were the "apostles of discord"—Carl McIntire, Edgar Bundy and M. G. Lowman—so aptly named some years ago by Ralph Lord Roy. Immediately upon hearing from the town crier that an Air Force manual had resurrected the charge of Communist infiltration of the Protestant churches, they mounted their chargers and, like modern Paul Reveres, set out to tell the nation that the manual was correct and that they could prove it.

Meanwhile, back in Washington the highest Pentagon officials, red-faced and hard pressed, repudiated the manual and made a prompt apology to the National Council of Churches (NCC) which had also been hit by the "missile." No sooner had they done this than they were under attack again—for making the apology! To no one's surprise, the attack came from the longtime defender of the nation's virtue, Rep. Francis E. Walter, Chairman of the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

Mr. Walter's own great virtue is that he is unchanging and predictable. Though the nation and the world move on, though his own committee previously investigated the charges of infiltration and concluded that "A minute number of core-hardened Communists and Communist-sympathizers have actually infiltrated themselves into the ranks of the loyal clergy. . . The members of the clergy who have associated with Communist causes is a minute percentage. . .," though the day turneth to night, Mr. Walter remains the same.

Of course it is true that some ministers *did* participate in groups that were later discovered to have Communist connections. But this proves little, especially when we realize this was largely in the Thirties when any man with a social conscience was forced to look to the left because of the vacuum elsewhere. However, a more unlikely group than the ninety-five biblical scholars who prepared the Revised Standard Version of the Bible would be hard to find. Yet the manual charged that thirty of them "had been affiliated with pro-Communist fronts, projects and publications." The fact that these men were particularly "non-political" makes these charges preposterous.

The public and the press responded true to form, too. For the most part, they applauded the NCC—silent for many years in the face of attacks

from the apostles of discord—for taking the offensive and winning its point. Denominational leaders were strong in their support of the council, and they wisely declined Mr. Walter's invitation to "investigate" the matter further. And many were surprised and encouraged when Cardinal Spellman repudiated the charges even though he later seemed to backtrack a bit.

Serious issues are raised when government documents carry such charges as these, and they have not yet been adequately dealt with by those in authority. Further, statements such as "Be especially watchful for persons who are trying to undermine the Air Force by belittling or sneering at its policies and accomplishments," when coupled with other recent Air Force fiascos including the recent "Big Brother" incident, are frightening in their implications. We also feel a deep sadness for those who, for various reasons, have not been able to recognize this particular incident for the farce that it is. This is the real tragedy.

W. H. C.

THE SIT-DOWN BOYCOTT

SEVERAL FEATURES of the spreading Negro boycott of lunch counters and restaurants in Southern cities are of considerable moral significance.

From all inside accounts, the movement has been launched and sustained quite spontaneously by Negro college students, long miffed at unequal treatment accorded them as customers in the use of public facilities. Senator Russell to the contrary, this does not represent a conspiracy of national civil rights organizations to foment racial strife; the roles of CORE and the NAACP have been minimal.

The Negro students, joined in many liberal locales by a few white students, have picked an especially vulnerable and sensitive point in the curious etiquette of racial relations—standing together and sitting apart. The economy of retail stores depends on non-discriminatory practices; in dress shops, shoe stores, bakeries and supermarkets, common courtesies to Negro and white customers are expected and received, with generally cheerful good will. As Harry Golden reminds us, we can stand up together with no fuss.

With a kind of ingenuous ingenuity, the student demonstrators have pointed up the incongruity of a custom that allows a Negro to buy doughnuts at a baked-goods counter, but not to eat one sitting down on a luncheon stool eight feet away.

A sense of the ridiculous, if nothing else, might lead store managers to concede the moral justice of the matter and alter policy.

But prejudice and custom are profoundly entrenched and humorless. Sitting together to eat is a symbol of an equality not yet granted by the average white Southerner. Especially in the Deep South cities where the boycott has now begun to penetrate, the demonstration has evoked the presence of crowds of surly riff-raff, self-appointed vigilantes of white supremacy looking for a fight. Under these circumstances, local police have followed courthouse sentiment by arresting the students on the legally dubious charges of disturbing the peace or trespassing.

The other striking feature of the movement is that in face of such severe provocation the discipline of non-violence has been carefully followed to a great degree. There have been flare-ups and scuffles; for the most part, however, the students have been "orderly and courteous, but persistent."

The inspiration of Martin Luther King at this point has been widespread. By reason of his example in the Montgomery bus boycott and that of other Christian leaders, Negro students are less critical of the church than they were only a few years ago. For they have seen that at least some churches are centers of initiative for equal justice and are not all centers of cautious inaction.

We may anticipate eventual changes in lunch counter policies. It is likely, however, that these will be dictated not by direct religious or moral suasion but by economic considerations—when the loss of Negro trade provokes local managers to change their tune, even at the risk of the temporary loss of some white customers—a risk more imagined than real.

W.B.

In Our Next Issue

DANIEL DAY WILLIAMS writes on the meaning of the resurrection and the new life in Christ.

WALTER G. MUELDER writes on Methodism's attempts to deal with the race question.

"The report of the Methodist commission on the denomination's jurisdictional system and the vigorous responses to that report display some significant dilemmas in Christian ethics and the power struggles in the Methodist Church. As a case study, the work of the commission shows the complexity and the compromises that may be forced by conflicts in the church and with its environment when the church operates within the framework of institutional unity."

Unprincipled Living: The Ethics of Obligation

ALEXANDER MILLER

WITH HIS usual forthrightness and eloquence, Robert E. Fitch, in "The Obsolescence of Ethics" (*C & C*, Nov. 16, 1959), stated two of his usual complaints: (1) That in these degenerate days the fine old-fashioned virtues are being corroded by the acids of relativism. (2) That this mischief is aided and abetted by Christian moralists who ought to know better, by their talk of "non-legislative," "spontaneous," "concrete and contextual" ethics, etc.

I would urge Mr. Fitch to go beyond this, either to succor us all by elaborating a "law" that is not another yoke of bondage, or join us in the patient work of developing a methodology in Christian ethics that is true to the character of the Gospel.

The discussion to date has run as follows:

Neo-Reformation theology has taught us an ingrained suspicion of natural law formulations: in part by its insistence not only on the exceeding sinfulness of sin but also on the exceeding pervasiveness of sin, and by its refusal to exempt human reason from the infection of evil. This theology refuses to accord to reason the competence to identify man's nature and need that would be implied in the traditional version of natural law, even in its restrained form as we have it in Aquinas. Another empirical reason for this refusal is that natural law formulae have been used to justify an almost endless variety of patterns both of social life and of Christian obedience, from the hierarchical and organic societies of the medieval theorists to the more democratic and equalitarian proposals of a Paine or Jefferson.

The abandonment of natural law formulations left us, however, with the problem of finding a basis for cooperation in social action between Christians and other men of goodwill. In *Christian Ethics and Social Policy*, John Bennett, following William Temple, proposed a set of "middle axioms" that would bridge the gap between the absolutes of the Gospel and the practicalities of politics. It appeared to represent simply the available consensus about the human and political good: for example, that every man has a right to do work consonant with his capacities and adequate to supply him with the means to a living; that every

child has a right to an education in terms of his ability, etc. This "middle axioms" formulation may have represented the working basis for a good deal of practical Christian activity, but in my judgment it lacks theoretical cogency and gives to Christian political work a prosaic character that has real but only limited relevance.

We have all lived in the refreshing shade of Reinhold Niebuhr's developing system: his insistence, as over against natural law, that there is no absolute except the love commandment and that for the legalist rigors of the older systems we must substitute "absolute loyalties and pragmatic politics." No rational or rabbinical system could do justice to the passionate spontaneity of the response of love, which introduced an element of "incoherence" into all the coherences of law, and which thrust beyond every nice calculation of more or less. Love structured to the necessities of a society infected with sin takes the form of justice, and justice is defined less by a self-authenticating reason than by the necessity of balancing counter-claims, reducing inordinate claims, "deflecting and cajoling" conflicting interests to serve the general good. This again has served our working purposes well. It implies, however, that if you want to serve man in terms of what is good for man, you arrive at what is "good" not by way of any systematic morphology of man, but rather simply by asking him what he wants.

A New Perspective

Since about 1950 there has developed what appears to be a coherent perspective; at least since it has been criticized as a whole it must constitute some sort of a whole. It includes the following items: Richard Niebuhr's article "The Center of Value" in Ruth Nanda Anshen's *Moral Principles of Action*; Paul Lehmann's essay in *Christian Faith and Social Action*; the Reinhold Niebuhr *Festschrift* compiled for the Frontier Fellowship; a chapter on "The Ethics of Justification" in my book, *The Renewal of Man*, which relies substantially on Niebuhr and Lehmann; Albert T. Rasmussen's *Christian Social Ethics*, where certain of these items are utilized and given extended application; and most recently Joseph Sittler's Rockwell Lectures, *The Structure of Christian Ethics*.

There is nothing in all this to give us a system.

Mr. Miller teaches in the Special Programs in Humanities at Stanford University. He was recently elected a Contributing Editor.

Indeed the thrust of this perspective is wholly against systems. Yet there is here certainly a mutual and developing indebtedness and a notable convergence of view.

Richard Niebuhr explicitly rejects any affinity between Christian ethics and absolutist theories of the traditional sort:

Although Christian and Jewish theologies have often identified themselves in their value thinking with objective and spiritualistic theories of value, relational value-theory is much more compatible with their fundamental outlook and much more in line with the realism of their reverence for being. Its relativism . . . agrees with their concern that relative things should be kept relative. . . .

This would seem to be consistent with Reinhold Niebuhr's insistence that the only absolute in the Christian life is the love commandment ("There is none good but one, that is, God."), so that the form of Christian behavior must be provided by the context in which it takes place. Now we have two terms, relational and contextual: Christian social action is relative to the human and social context in which the life of love is acted out.

It was Paul Lehmann who first and most explicitly accepted the etymological affinity of *ethics* with *ethos*: ethics are in some sense social products, and Christian ethics are in particular the product of the *koinonia* that is the fruit of the Gospel. This would seem to mean that while some of the earlier non-sympathizers were inclined to be suspicious of the term *ethics* for the same reason that they rejected *principles* ("Principles!" said a Cambridge professor of Christian ethics, "I wouldn't have the filthy things around the place.") because they smacked too much of the system, Lehmann would retain the term in its strict etymological meaning.

Christian ethics refers not to a rational or other pattern of behavior or set of precepts, but to the *style of life* that is seemly, that is becoming to a Christian man, that is consonant with membership in the Community whose God is the Lord, the Community of those who have passed from death unto life because they love the brethren. This, of course, puts Christian ethics in strict continuity with the covenant ethics of the Old Testament, which are no more rational than they are pragmatic in the ordinary sense but are peculiarly and particularly (if the word *ethics* is appropriate at all) the ethics that represent the mutual obligations incumbent upon a covenant folk.

Joseph Sittler, both in *The Structure of Christian Ethics* and elsewhere, has brought his notable

eloquence to elucidate this notion of a style of life as representing the true character of Christian ethics. And he went on in his book to insist that a style of life with such a large component of uncoerced spontaneity in it is misrepresented as soon as it is codified. It has about it an *occasionalism* that alone can do justice to "the non-legal, inexhaustible, principle-transcending intent and power of them." They can no more be in a system than can the teaching of Jesus, which moves "by occasional lightning flashes and gull-like swoops into concrete situations."

(This last phrase, with its vivid suggestion of an extreme occasionalism, has been fair game for Fitch and other critics, and I have heard Sittler draw back from it in conversation. And while I sympathize with Mr. Fitch's craving for "principles" rather than "gull-like swoops," he does not seem to me to suggest how we can do better than cage the gull, a suggestion that I find unhelpful.)

And its Critics

In general rejoinder to this perspective, three criticisms come to mind.

One can only assume that it is writers of this general stamp, especially those who use the language of extreme occasionalism, whom Paul Ramsey has in mind in his essay on "Love and Law" in *Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social and Political Thought*.

. . . There are a number of persons, more or less of the neo-orthodox persuasion, who propose to swelter out the present moral crisis with their own personal decision impaled on the point of the existential moment or suspended wholly within a solution of justification by faith.

This is exhilarating but not very illuminating, since presumably Mr. Ramsay believes that some attention should be paid to the claims of the existential moment, and I take him to be approximately orthodox on justification by faith. He goes on, however, to a cogent and critical examination of Niebuhr's notion of a love so beyond law that it fails to do justice to that structure of human selfhood which is accessible to reason, a description of which has been attempted in certain versions of natural law, and which must play some part in determining any calculation of the human good. That criticism and Niebuhr's response to it are of abiding importance.

In *The Chicago Theological Seminary Register* for February 1958, Alvin Pitcher, writing on "A

New Era in Protestant Social Ethics?," analyzes this perspective and adds the name of James Gustafson on the basis of his essay in *Faith and Ethics: The Theology of Richard Niebuhr*. There are some phrases of Pitcher's commentary that I find obscure. For example, he complains that, on the one hand, these "new era" people are "content to analyze the social situation as social scientists without attempting a 'theological' interpretation of such analysis" while, on the other hand, they "depend upon the biblical witness for all the social structure analysis possible." But he does support what I take to be Paul Ramsey's criticism by his own critical reference to Sittler's statement that a Christian ethic "is under no necessity to impart into its basic structure anything from the rich and ennobling tradition of philosophical thought about the good, the valuable, etc."

In capsule fashion I would like to state how the issues appear to me. Substantially I believe that the nature of Christian ethics has been rightly identified in the new perspective. In this area as elsewhere, biblical thought has no kind of continuity with idealism or naturalism. In terms of covenant and *koinonia* it binds us to an understanding of life and conduct that derives directly from that active and incarnate love whereby God gathers a people for himself and by that same love enmeshes them in a profound mutuality of obligation that is for pure love's sake.

The Christian moralist can concede without alarm that ethics are social products: that man lives by his loyalties rather than by his reason, and that his loyalties are normally both more persuasive and more potent than his reason. But the Christian moralist will raise with utmost urgency the question of what community generates our basic commitments, to what object our loyalties are given. This is the ancient issue of idolatry—the one true God or an idol—which is the issue determinative of conduct as it is of life.

Habits, not Rules

Three problems remain.

(1) If the Gospel binds us simply to a pragmatic calculation of the maximum human good, whence do we derive the "content" of Christian ethics? Does the Gospel not only motivate us to do the good, but also provide its own definition of what that good is?

I have adapted Reinhold Niebuhr's "absolute loyalties and pragmatic politics" formula to suggest that the Christian decision is compounded of *faith* and *facts*, that a decision is likely to be valid

in the degree to which the faith is rightly held (which means *obeyed*, not simply *understood*) and the facts are fully known. This leaves us far short of infallibility, but this is not only a salutary but a safe place for a Christian—certainly a Protestant Christian—to be.

I also generally agree that you can find out what is good for man simply by asking him. He will tell you that he needs a certain amount of bread and a certain amount of freedom, and that he would like them in reasonable balance. I still think that for most situations this kind of *jus gentium* calculus will do, but I am more and more inclined to believe that at this point we do need something like a morphology of man. It may be that we ushered Aristotle out too summarily, and I am now inclined to propose that he does provide us with an immensely important, though provisional morphology of man. We can use it if we remember that it is the morphology of man in sin: it describes man, who as a sinner knows nothing better than his own good, doing what he can to secure it with the use of the best implements he has, a reason which while sinfully subordinated to the ends of the self is yet shrewd to calculate what those ends are.

(2) How can we avoid a sheer occasionalism that requires that each decision be approached *de novo* and does no justice to whatever regularities, if not rules, there be in the moral life?

While there is no way of deriving from the approach here defended a systematic casuistry of anything like the traditional kind, we are not proposing a life without rules. Life does have its regularities, and the community of faith as it deals with such regularities forms habits that are both salutary and reassuring. Since one marriage is in salient respects much like another, I do not need to go into the agony of existential wrestling (or "sweltering," to use Paul Ramsey's word) before I decide that adultery is normally destructive of marriage. But *habits* have the advantage over the older *rules* in that bad habits are susceptible of being corrected, while rules are more difficult to revise.

(3) Since the older natural law formulations and the Temple-Bennett "middle axioms" were designed to do the necessary work of defining a basis for cooperation on moral matters between Christians and other men of goodwill, is it possible to spell out an alternate basis less vulnerable and more cogent?

Since men live by loyalties rather than by reason, I am not persuaded that the basis for cooperation

between Christians and other men must be some kind of rational consensus. I note also that on certain of the matters where unanimity is strongest, the conduct so approved is beyond rational justification: for example, the "irrational" sacrifice of the good man for men less "worthy." I think, therefore, that the normal basis for joint social action is not rational natural law as traditionally understood, but a combination of a prudential calculation reinforced and corrected by an innate impulse of justice and compassion. I say an "impulse" because, while never strong enough, it is often stronger than the reasons men haltingly use to justify it.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Nixon Defended: Dr. Bennett Questioned

TO THE EDITORS: A careful study of Mr. Bennett's editorial on "the candidacy of Mr. Nixon," (Jan. 26 issue) leaves this reader in some doubt about the meaning of the subtitle of your publication—"A Christian Journal of Opinion." Not doubting for a moment the Christian's responsibility to speak out on any political issue, I do question the form that this "prophetic judgment" takes.

First, I question the failure of a learned Christian to apply the normal critical standards of inner unity to his own work. Is it fair to say in one sentence "Vice President Nixon does very well in the public opinion polls against the most popular Democrats" (even better against Governor Rockefeller), and in the next paragraph that, "For the inside group of professional politicians to control the choice of the convention seven months in advance is certainly a failure of democracy"? Is it reasonable to draw from the facts that the great majority of Republicans favor Nixon and that Rockefeller withdrew from the race through his own volition the conclusion that "the chief impression that is left by all that has happened is that Nixon is as skillful a political operator as one can expect to find"?

Is it consistent to say on one page there is a "question of whether Nixon does represent any very solid convictions about the great issues," and on the next page to admit that he "seems to understand" the problems of India, foreign aid and relations with Russia? What is the relation of the sentence which states that in Nixon's record "there is little that one can learn . . . in regard to his convictions about the Cold War" to the admission that "some of his speeches have shown a high quality of statesmanship"?

Second, is it a mark of "Christian" opinion to seek out loaded words and phrases to apply to one candidate alone? Witness the writer's concern that the fears of the critics may still apply to a future President, and that Nixon may now be "unscrupulous in the smearing of opponents and . . . nar-

rowly partisan." I wonder if Mr. Bennett's fears of Presidents of the future reflects his opinion of Presidents of the past. Did he express concern when President Roosevelt rode to power on phrases that compared the wealthy to the money changers in the temple? Did he laugh at "Martin, Barton and Fish"? Did he feel that Harry Truman raised the Presidency above partisan politics?

I am sure that Mr. Bennett was not a great admirer of Senator McCarthy. Yet it is interesting to note some similarities to the late Senator's methods in this editorial. The name McCarthy has become a dirty word in our vocabulary. Why, then, did the writer insist on including it in this editorial? Even in saying that Nixon's "record was much better than McCarthy's," the writer focuses the reader's attention on a possible similarity between the two men. Is the inclusion of McCarthy's name really helpful to the reader's understanding? Is it not, rather, a modified form of guilt by association?

At one point, Mr. Bennett says that Nixon "went to the Senate as a special representative of a clique of reactionary businessmen." In using this loaded phrase, Mr. Bennett is not being precise. What are the names of these businessmen? In what way are they reactionary? I am not aware of the fact that any congressman is the special representative of any clique. Was not Mr. Nixon the choice of the majority of his electorate, the State of California?

It would be helpful if Mr. Bennett would be more precise in defining his terms. He uses the words reactionary and liberal without clarity. For instance, it is clear to me that in saying that, "anyone who can get into a frenzy about the ADA has not moved very far as a liberal," Mr. Bennett interprets "liberal" in a different way than I.

Third, I wonder if it is Christian to write a biased editorial in a manner which is designed to give it an aura of objectivity. Mr. Bennett includes just enough sentences that point to possibly good qualities in Nixon (i.e. his effectiveness as a public speaker and his position on Russia) to give the impression that he is attempting to be fair. His final paragraph even suggests the possibility of a serious and impartial appraisal of Nixon's candidacy.

However, does this cloak of impartiality not mislead the reader? Is Mr. Bennett's aim not really partisan? If Mr. Bennett's only intention is the damage of Nixon's chances, is he being honest in creating the impression that he is attempting to be impartial? It is the hope of this reader that "A Christian Journal of Opinion" will attempt to be what it claims to be. This does not include either the attempt to justify indiscriminately the Democratic Party or the effort to malign indiscriminately Mr. Nixon.

JOHN C. DANFORTH
New Haven, Conn.

Mr. Danforth has made some good points. In general his letter is an indication of the kind of differences of feeling and of opinion that we can

expect during the coming campaign.

The first draft of my editorial was written before Governor Rockefeller withdrew and in that context it was not partisan. When it turned out that the Republican candidate to all intents and purposes was already selected, I felt that such a public event warranted discussion in our columns and so I revised the editorial at the risk of being too personal and partisan. I believe that the foreclosing of a contest for the nomination was a disservice to the party and to the nation. It would be far better if Mr. Nixon could be measured by comparison with another candidate as different as Mr. Rockefeller.

My apparent inconsistency in saying that there is a question whether Mr. Nixon represents any solid convictions and then praising him for his understanding of various issues is that Mr. Nixon gives the impression that he has learned a great deal intellectually about these issues without seeming to be the embodiment of any issue or point of view whatever. This is part of what I mean by "operator." He gives the impression of being a man who has learned to be on the politically advantageous side. He will get all possible advantage from the new foreign policy while it arouses hope in the American people, but this new policy does not grow out of anything in Mr. Nixon's past and instead would seem to be opposed to his predilections.

Mr. Danforth charges me with posing as objective in order to slay Nixon with greater effectiveness. Actually that was not my intention. The editorial was a reflection of my own uncertainty about Mr. Nixon and even of some degree of hope that he has changed quite radically for the better.

Mr. Danforth does not realize the extent to which Mr. Nixon offended many Americans, not as much by an excess of partisanship as by a studied unscrupulousness in his campaigning wherever the Communist issue could be used against his opponents. This is nothing like the partisan exuberance of a Truman which can easily be discounted for what it is. It is a cold, calculating misrepresentation of individuals. This was true of his California campaigns against Jerry Voorhis and Helen Gahagan Douglas. It was true of his dealing with such figures as Dean Acheson and Adlai Stevenson in the national campaigns.

His early years do suggest a parallel with Joseph

McCarthy because both rose to power by misusing the Communist issue against their opponents. Nixon's record as an investigator was entirely different from McCarthy's, and any comparison there would be unfair.

As for my statement that Mr. Nixon represented a clique of reactionary businessmen, their names are a matter of public record. Some indication of the views of the group is suggested by some statements made to reporters by the fund's trustee, Dana C. Smith, at the time the fund came to light in 1952. For instance, "Our thinking was that we had to fight selling with selling, and for that job Dick Nixon seemed to be the best salesman against socialization available. That's his gift, really—salesmanship. . . . Warren has too much of the other point of view [selling centralized control of all phases of American life], and he never has gone out selling the free-enterprise system. But Dick did just what we wanted him to do." (These quotations appeared in William Costello's article in the Nov. 2, 1959 issue of *The New Republic*.)

It is one of the facts of political life for which we should prepare that Mr. Nixon, more than any other person mentioned in connection with the Presidency, arouses very deep distrust among millions of Americans. The polls never show the intensity of the distrust among those who oppose a candidate. This distrust is of Mr. Nixon's own making; perhaps he can go far to wipe it out, but he alone can do it. I certainly hope that he does. I have no intention of harping on his past performances.

J. C. B.

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